

# DAILY BULLETIN

MARCH 4, 2005

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### NEW ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER " HUMAN RIGHTS-UPDATE "

During the Commission on Human Rights, the U.S. Delegation will send regular updates including statements, press releases, and a variety of articles related to human rights, via e-mail.

If you wish to be added to the mailing list for this newsletter, please send an e-mail to: [update@usmission.ch](mailto:update@usmission.ch)

## RICE WARNS SYRIA, IRAN TO MEET INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS

Secretary of state, Danish foreign minister brief press after meeting

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said March 3 that any Syrian offer of a partial withdrawal from Lebanon is unacceptable.

During a joint press briefing with Danish Foreign Minister Per Stig Moeller, Rice also again warned Iran that, while the United States believes the situation created by its nuclear ambitions can be resolved diplomatically, referral of the matter to the United Nations Security Council "remains an option."

Rice said she had not seen a Syrian statement suggesting a drawdown of forces from Lebanon rather than a withdrawal. She added, however, that U.N. Security Council Resolution 1559 was quite clear: "It meant the withdrawal of all Syrian forces and ... Syrian security personnel as well."

Asked about reports Iran has begun construction of an underground tunnel system designed to shield its suspected nuclear-weapons program, Rice refused to confirm the reports, but said, "there is considerable concern about a number of Iranian activities."

Rice said the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) "deserves and indeed has the right to investigate and investigate thoroughly with full Iranian cooperation these activities, which are indeed suspicious."

She reiterated that negotiating with the European Three (EU-3) - the United Kingdom, France and Germany -- offers "the best chance" for Iran to show whether it is prepared to make "a strategic choice, to convince the world that they're not trying to build a nuclear weapon."

"The Security Council remains an option, and once it's in the Security Council then there are any number of things that the Security Council could choose to do," she said.

Rice said the EU-3 negotiations are "leading in the right direction." However, "thus far the Iranians have shown no indication that they are interested in taking that deal," she added.

In her opening remarks, Rice praised Denmark as a "very great partner" and described her discussion with Moeller as focusing on the transatlantic alliance.

Moeller in turn said there is "more convergence than we perhaps had before, on Iran, on Iraq, where we work together toward stabilizing the new government towards democracy and elections during the year."

## BUSH DECLARES MARCH 2005 WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

President praises contributions by generations of U.S. women

Urging Americans to celebrate the achievements of the nation's women, President Bush has declared March 2005 to be Women's History Month.

"I encourage all Americans to celebrate the extraordinary contributions and accomplishments of American women and to continue our progress in making our society more prosperous, just, and equal," the president said in a March 2 proclamation.

Following is the text of the proclamation:

## THE WHITE HOUSE

March 2, 2005

### Women's History Month, 2005

By the President of the United States of America  
A Proclamation

During Women's History Month, we celebrate the achievements of our Nation's women. For generations, American women have helped build our great Nation through their leadership as writers, teachers, artists, politicians, doctors, and scientists, and in other professions. As mothers, daughters, and sisters, women have supported and strengthened American families and communities. Women are at the forefront of entrepreneurship in America, creating millions of new jobs and helping to build our Nation's economic prosperity.

We celebrate those who have broken down barriers for women, such as Jacqueline Cochran, who was the founder and director of the Women's Air Force Service Pilots during World War II and the first woman to break the sound barrier. Gerty Theresa Radnitz Cori was the first American woman to receive a Nobel Prize in the sciences, and her research significantly advanced the treatment of diabetes. In 1926, Olympic Gold Medalist Gertrude Ederle became the first woman to swim the English Channel. Marian Anderson, a Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient, opened doors in music as the first African American to perform with the New York Metropolitan Opera. Juliette Gordon Low encouraged community service and the physical, mental, and spiritual development of America's young women as founder of the Girl Scouts of the United States of America. As we work to advance freedom and peace and fight the war on terror, American women in uniform are serving at posts at home and across the world, taking great risks as they make our Nation more secure.

As we commemorate Women's History Month, I encourage all Americans to celebrate the extraordinary contributions and accomplishments of American women and to continue our progress in making our society more prosperous, just, and equal.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 2005 as Women's History Month. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate programs,

ceremonies, and activities that honor the history, accomplishments, and contributions of American women.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this second day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

#### UNITED STATES OFFERS \$100,000 IN ASSISTANCE FOR AFGHAN WINTER

Unusually heavy snowfall and cold temperatures causing suffering

The United States is contributing \$100,000 in emergency assistance to alleviate suffering caused by unusually heavy snowfall and cold temperatures in Afghanistan, according to a statement released by State Department Spokesman Richard Boucher March 3.

Following is the text of Boucher's statement:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Office of the Spokesman  
March 3, 2005

#### U.S. Contribution to Afghanistan Winter Emergency Needs

In response to a request from the government of Afghanistan, the United States is contributing \$100,000 in emergency assistance to alleviate suffering caused by unusually heavy snowfall and cold temperatures in Afghanistan.

The Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) is providing \$50,000 in FY-2005 funding to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) from the Bureau's existing budget for South Asia. IFRC will use the funding to purchase and transport emergency supplies to affected populations in Kabul and in the provinces of Bamian, Ghazni, Paktika, and Baghlan. These provinces are home to many former refugees who repatriated from Iran and Pakistan following the fall of the Taliban regime.

The U.S. Agency for International Development's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) is providing \$50,000 in FY-2005 funds through the U.S. Embassy in Kabul to the Afghan Red Crescent for purchase and distribution of relief supplies. In addition, ongoing humanitarian projects have been modified to help meet immediate needs and to prepare for possible flooding in the spring.

#### TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY IN CUBA ALREADY UNDER WAY

State Department's Noriega reports more opposition to Cuban regime

The transition to a democratic Cuba is already under way, says the U.S. State Department's Roger Noriega.

In his March 3 prepared testimony before a U.S. House of Representatives panel reviewing the situation in Cuba, Noriega said that compared to just a few years ago -- "despite the brutally repressive nature" of the Cuban regime's tactics -- "there are now more opposition activities" occurring throughout the island nation.

Noriega, assistant secretary of state for Western Hemisphere affairs, said that although these activities are "in many ways limited and fragile, I believe that we will be able to look back at them years from now and see that they were indeed significant and the precursor to a Cuban future free of misery and repression."

The official said that during the previous week, he told a group of Cuban-American supporters of a free Cuba that each of them knows something that most of the rest of the world does not: "the transition [to democracy] in Cuba is already under way."

That transition is "happening in the hearts and minds of more and more Cubans every day," said Noriega. "They may not agree on everything -- and that's okay. But they do agree on this: the Cuban people must claim their God-given right to decide for themselves about how to make a better future for their children."

As the Cuban people “claim that right to write their own future,” the United States “will stand with them,” said Noriega, who testified before a joint oversight hearing of the House Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere and the House Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations.

Noriega said the Bush administration is actively engaged in helping the Cuban people create a democratic future for their country. For example, he said, the United States has provided \$14.4 million -- of a proposed \$29 million -- to support the development of civil society in Cuba and the “empowerment of the Cuban people in their efforts to effect positive change.” Some \$6 million, he said, has already been transferred to the U.S. Agency for International Development to dramatically expand that agency’s work with civil society groups in Cuba.

The United States is also working with international partners to promote greater global involvement in helping Cuban civil society activists by channeling \$8.4 million through a “new process designed to tap into the innovative ideas of democracy activists around the world and [to] help the Cuban people implement them on the island.”

In addition, the United States has streamlined licensing requirements so that, for the first time ever, high-speed laptop computers can be delivered to Cuban civil society groups.

Noriega said another key component of the U.S. strategy on Cuba is to break the Cuban regime’s information blockade on the Cuban people and “to bring a message of hope to the island.”

Noriega said that to circumvent Cuban jamming of broadcast signals, Commando Solo -- a C-130 aircraft equipped with a powerful electronic transmission capability -- has flown on a regular basis, beaming U.S.-backed TV Marti signals to the island. According to Noriega, multisource information indicates that the TV Marti programs can be seen and heard at “an unprecedented level and through a wide swath” of Cuba.

The United States also provides moral support to Cuban dissidents by documenting and publicizing the cases of Cuba’s “prisoners of conscience,” said Noriega. U.S. officials, he said, follow more than 350 cases and regularly meet with the prisoners’ families and other Cuban citizens to discuss human-rights concerns.

Noriega said another part of the U.S. strategy is an “aggressive effort” to identify and degrade Cuban-regime “revenue streams,” such as tourism, which he said has replaced sugar exports as Cuba’s main foreign-exchange earner.

“We want to deny resources” that the Cuban regime uses to “finance its repressive apparatus that keeps the Cuban people in ideological bondage,” said Noriega.

In sum, the United States is providing “unprecedented, robust, and active support to courageous Cubans daring to think and act independently of the regime so that they can succeed in realizing their dreams,” Noriega said.

**Pleases Note:** Most texts and transcript mentioned in the U.S. Mission Daily Bulletin are available via our homepage: [www.usmission.ch](http://www.usmission.ch)

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